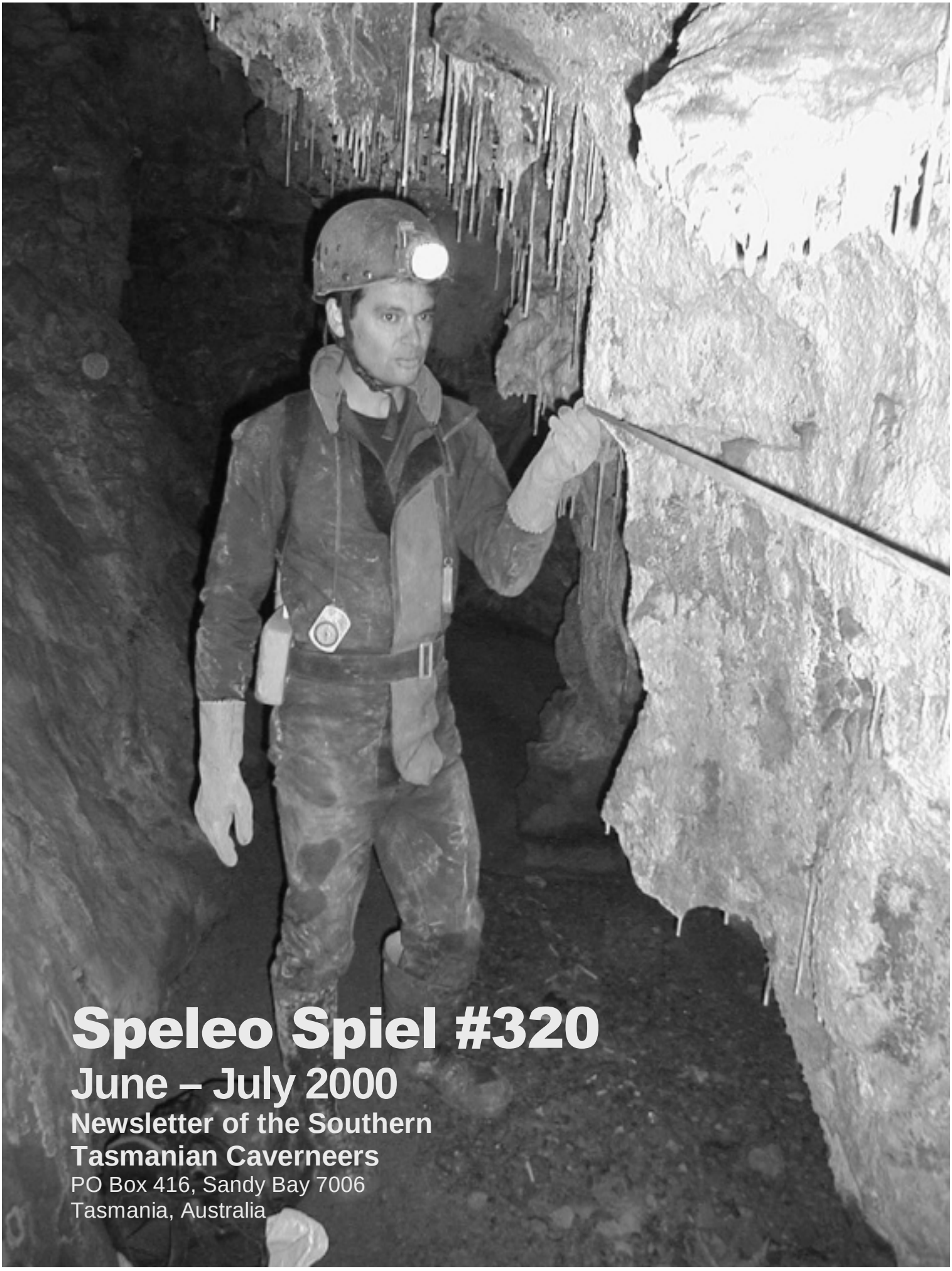

Speleo Spiel #320

June – July 2000

Newsletter of the Southern Tasmanian Caverneers

PO Box 416, Sandy Bay 7006
Tasmania, Australia

Front Cover:
Dave Rasch surveying in Wolf Hole June 11,2000. Photo by: Arthur Clarke

STC was formed from the *Tasmanian Caverneering Club*, the *Southern Caving Society* and the *Tasmanian Cave and Karst Research Group*. ***STC*** is the modern variant of the Oldest Caving Club in Australia.

The Speleo Spiel

Newsletter of the
Southern Tasmanian Caverneers Incorporated
PO Box 416, Sandy Bay, Tas. 7006
http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/scaving/
ABN: 73-381-060-862

Issue No. 320
June – July 2000

Editorial

I was awaken by Jeff who alerted me to the fact that the Spiel was nearly due. "Surely not" I replied, "I only just finished the last one!". The last two months have moved along really fast. So I jumped into high gear and notified my dedicated team of proof readers to expect some drafts to appear real soon. They diligently worked through the night, pointing out the typos ready for the final edit. Then I was in trouble, Microsoft has just released a new editing feature: spontaneous-crash2000. I telepathically spoke CEO of Microsoft, Bill Gates and am printing the copy as the regular STC General Business Meeting is taking place! Now that's cutting it "Close to the Bone".

In the last issue I printed a copy of our membership contact details. This was a late inclusion and the details were not the most current. My apologies to those members whose details were incorrectly published and especially to Mick Williams who was omitted completely. A current listing can be found in this issue on page 19.

Jamie Allison

Club Meetings

General business meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month (7:30pm for a 8:00pm start). Social gatherings and special events are held on the third Wednesday of each Month starting at 8:00pm. Meetings are convened at the Shipwright Arms Hotel in the area just inside the front door (near the fireplace). All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Wednesday, 2nd August	General Business Meeting and Spiel #320 Distribution
Wednesday, 16th August	Social Gathering
Wednesday, 6th September	General Business Meeting
Wednesday, 20th September	Social Gathering including: Caving Films & Video Night
Wednesday, 4th October	General Business Meeting and Spiel #321 Distribution

Upcoming Trips and Events

Please watch the STC List Server for trips and events over the next 2 months. Plus enter Mt Cripps: 26th – 29th October, Show Day "Long Weekend" in your diary now (before it gets mined). More details in the next Spiel (#321).

Arthur and Andras giving "Toxy" a haircut. Is this what these cavers do when they're not underground? Photo by: Robyn Claire

Club Matters

A warm welcome to new full member: Steve Phipps. Steve has written a Khazad Dum trip report. Check it out on page 8.

From the Gear Store

The club lights are now recharged via sunshine; Jeff and Sarah have had a Grid-Connected Photovoltaic Array added to their house roof. So now, when you are seeing in the dark, you are making use of stored sunlight!

Submitting Material for Publication in the Spiel

Here are a few tips from the editor to help you when submitting material to the Speleo Spiel.

1. Get someone to proof read your article before sending it in.
2. If possible, email your article to *jamie.allison@dspl.com.au* in an RTF (Rich Text Format) rather than just plain text.
3. Send along some pictures: either in a digital format (non-compressed JPEG format) or drop your originals into me for scanning. I can scan slides, film and prints.
4. Caption your pictures and don't forget to credit the person that actually took the photo (even if it is yourself)
5. Put your name at the top of the article you are submitting, that way there can be no mistake about who actually wrote the article.
6. Finally: ink it, don't think it! Get pen to paper and tell us about your trip.

Letters to the Editor

Have your say about the club, the Spiel or anything else. Send your letters to the Editor to:

jamie.allison@dspl.com.au

or standard mail to:

STC Speleo Spiel
Letters to the Editor
PO Box 416
Sandy Bay,
Tasmania. 7006

The Mt. Cripps karst quarrying proposal: revised EL boundaries

By Arthur Clarke

Introduction – location and access:
The Mount Cripps karst area in NW Tasmania lies within an extensive area of Ordovician (Gordon) Limestone located about 80km south of Burnie and 20km west of Cradle Mountain. The limestone area is largely incorporated in and bounded by North Forest Products timber leases and the Cradle Mountain Link Road to the north, by *Mackintosh Creek* and the *Vale River* to the east, the new hydro-electricity impoundment (*Lake Mackintosh*) to the south and then immediately west lie the two sulphide ore mines: the Que River Mine and Hellyer Mine operations (both situated east of the Murchison Highway).

Although access to western parts of the karst could be gained via the numerous roads associated with either of the two mine operations, access to the main body of the karst is normally gained via the Cradle Mountain Link Road, branching off onto Forestry roads through the North Forest leases, and then along established access tracks put in by the Savage River Caving Club (SRCC). The SRCC have their own established cavers' cottage: "Th'ut", on the edge of the karst. Although these Forestry roads have boom gate barriers across them, and thus a permit and key and are normally required from North Forests, SRCC have a "controlling" access arrangement to the karst and access can usually be arranged via SRCC. An alternate access from the south and west is also possible using a boat via *Lake Mackintosh*, with access to boat ramps from side roads off the Murchison Highway.

The "known" karst, its significance, land tenure and the quarrying proposal:
The Mt. Cripps karst occurs within a SW to NE trending, roughly linear band of limestone approximately 17km long and 6-7km wide at its widest point: between gridlines 95East and 96East, where it includes an area of limestone now submerged by this "new" *Lake Mackintosh* impoundment plus an area of limestone south of the lake [See Figure 1 in *Speleo Spiel* #319 (Clarke 2000b)]. In his list of Tasmanian karst areas, Kiernan records the karst in three component parts, separated by the new lake. The area west of the northern arm of *Lake Mackintosh* (listed as "*W8*" – "*Charter-Southwell*"), is described as being geologically "*…a westward extension of the Mt. Cripps and Blackwater Creek areas*…" - the two other parts of the karst – north and south of the lake: the northern body of karst is listed as "*W10*" – "*Mt. Cripps* (*Mt. Mayday / Mackintosh*)" and the southern component is described as "*W11*" – "*Blackwater River*" (Kiernan, 1995).

As shown in Figure 1 (Clarke 2000b), the "known" *Mt. Cripps* area includes a section of polygonal karst – one of the several outstanding features of this area - one of only 3 or 4 known areas of polygonal karst in Australia. In using the word "known" – it should be stated from the outset, that there is likely to be considerably more karst in the "unknown" or unexplored areas of limestone further west (in the region that is now the subject of the modified mineral exploration license by Western Metals). SRCC have been extremely diligent in documentation of the known karst – their efforts have probably resulted in the Mount Cripps karst as being one of the most well documented and mapped karst areas in Australia. There are about 215 known caves (most of them surveyed) and another ten or so karst features including swallets, springs, karst windows and significant dolines (without caves).

On the basis of its known karst attributes: an undisturbed area of glaciated karst (and its polygonal karst, the caves, their enigmatic hydrology and the cave fauna), the Mt. Cripps area has been the subject of previous attempts to protect the area. It has been proposed for both World Heritage listing (by inclusion within an extension of the existing nearby boundary) and for inclusion on the National Estate register. Described as the "*Mt Cripps-Southwell River*" area, the proposal for Mt. Cripps to be included as part of the World Heritage Area was contained in a ministerial report to the Tasmanian Government by the Dept. of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage in 1990. The report stated: "*…The Mt Cripps-Southwell River area would add to the values of the World Heritage Area in terms of criterion (ii), and further satisfy the conditions of integrity for criteria (i) (earth's evolutionary history - sites should contain all or most of the key interrelated or interdependent elements) and (ii) (geological processes-sites should contain the necessary elements to demonstrate the process and be self-perpetuating), for natural property*" (PWH, 1990). This ministerial report was not endorsed by the government or furthered as a nomination for World Heritage Area.

The nomination for inclusion on the Register of the National Estate was contained in a more recent report to the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement (RFA) that detailed significant sites of geo-conservation value within Tasmanian forests (Dixon and Duhig, 1996). This report identified the "*Mt. Cripps Karst*" as an area extending west to the Southwell River valley, based on the boundaries defined in the Tasmanian Karst Atlas (Kiernan, 1995). The Mt. Cripps karst was deemed as a place "*considered to surpass the threshold for listing on the Register of the National Estate*" and was considered to satisfy National Estate sub-criteria: A1, A2, A3, B1 and D1 (Dixon and Duhig, 1996).

Although partially leased to North Forests, the current land tenure of the Mt. Cripps karst is still officially described as being unallocated Crown land. Since the RFA, the "new" land tenures have not been officially gazetted or proclaimed, but the karst area generally falls into two tenure categories: as a *Conservation Area* in the north and as part of the *Reynolds Falls Nature Recreation Area* in the south, with a small section of unallocated land as State Forest, west of the *Southwell River* (Clarke, 2000b). Tasmanian Govt. legislation permits mineral exploration and mining in both these tenures as well as in unallocated State Forest land.

In February this year, Mineral Resources Tasmania inserted an advertisement in "*The Advocate*" on behalf of the Western Australian exploration section of Western Metals Resources Limited. Western Metals were seeking an exploration license (EL/99) to source limestone as Category 1 and Category 3 (industrial and construction) minerals from a 29km² area that represented 7/8ths of the Mt. Cripps limestone karst area (Clarke, 2000b). Little was known about Western Metals, apart from the fact they were the new owners of the Hellyer Mine – a mine that lay barely 1km NNW of the known Mt. Cripps karst (Heap, 1999; 2000). However, it was known that Ken Grimes (from Hamilton, Western Victoria) had been contracted by Western Metals to perform a karst assessment report, describing the implications of karst for proposed limestone quarry sites in the Mt. Cripps area (Grimes, 1999). There were four objections to the EL: the appellants recently attended a mediation session

convened by MRT, with the Mines Dept. Registrar acting as mediator.

The Mineral Resources Tasmania mediation session in Burnie:
As reported in *Speleo Spiel* #319 (Clarke 2000b), a mediation session was held in Burnie on June 1st 2000 – between the limestone quarrying proponents and the four appellants – the organisations opposing the exploration license for development of a limestone quarry or quarries in the limestone area that includes the known Mt. Cripps karst. On one side of the boardroom table in Burnie, there was Greg Marshall – General Manager of Hellyer Mine (owned by Western Metals: the company wanting to source limestone from the Mt. Cripps karst area), together with representatives of Mineral Resources Tasmania (MRT) and Ian Houshold (for DPIWE). On the other side there were the representatives of three appellant speleo bodies: ASF, SRCC and STC, together with Henry Shannon officially representing himself and his "out-of-time" personal submission (and unofficially representing NC: Northern Caverneers), plus a representative for the fourth appellant: the North West Walking Club.

As a result of concerns expressed by the speleo groups about the "known" Mt. Cripps karst, its caves and cave attributes including cave fauna – in the eastern portion of the Exploration License (EL) proposal area, Western Metals agreed to reduce the size of their EL area proposal by two-thirds, from a 29km² area down to 10km². As indicated by the map (Figure 1) on page 14 of the last *Speleo Spiel* (#319), the area of 10km² - indicated by the General Manager for Western Metals in Tasmania (and MRT officials) – was predominantly west of both the *Southwell River* and the northern arm of *Lake Mackintosh* (formed by the "drowned" lower reaches of the *Southwell River*). As shown by Figure 1, this 10km² area includes two known areas of limestone: the narrow band of limestone (where a resurgence stream is known), immediately west of the Silurian Sandstone area (that contains Southwell Peak) and a broad area of limestone (of undetermined karst value) west of the northern arm in *Lake Mackintosh*. The map in *Speleo Spiel* #319 shows that the 10km² area indicated by Western Metals lies west of Gridline 3(95)000mE and south of Gridline 53(93)000mN.

The MRT (Mines Dept.) Registrar – Dennis Burgess – advised that he would forward Minutes of the mediation meeting and the "agreed" outcomes to the appellants and all attending, requesting that the appellants consider their position and advise MRT at some stage what their position would be: i.e., continuing their objection to the EL, or withdrawing their objection. There were no time frames put in place for this procedure. Burgess advised those attending the mediation session, that the revised boundaries for a modified EL application area would be forwarded in the mail.

Mediation outcomes and different EL boundaries: what area are we talking about?
After returning from the MRT mediation session in Burnie, I was a bit confused about the EL area, its boundaries and the offer by Western Metals to reduce the size of their EL area proposal by two-thirds, from a 29km² area down to 10km². The marked boundaries for Western Metal's EL application on their Tasmanian mapping (Sophia: 100,000sheet) **showed their original EL proposal was a 26km² area, not the 29km² area shown in the advertisement placed by MRT in "*The Advocate*"** (Clarke, 2000a; 2000b). The Western Metals map showed their EL boundary virtually following the exact boundary of the known limestone outcrop as shown in their karst environmental consultant's report (Grimes, 1999) and reports by Dave Heap (Heap, 1999; 2000). Considering this confusion, I forwarded a copy of the Figure 1 map from *Speleo Spiel* #319 to Dennis Burgess at MRT – requesting his confirmation that this 10km² area (as discussed at Burnie) was indeed the area being agreed to as the revised or modified EL application area. I received no response from MRT, apart from an acknowledgment by Burgess that he had received the "Figure 1" map.

Subsequently, in mid-June, the appellants were sent copies of "*notes from the meeting held at Burnie*" – (which strangely enough differed from my Minutes of the meeting) – along with a covering letter that "*listed matters that were agreed*" and a request form to confirm whether the appellants were withdrawing or not withdrawing their objections. The four "agreed" outcomes listed in the MRT letter from Burgess were:

- Application area to be modified to drop all areas to the east of gridline 395000mE.
- The applicant will seek advice from Karst experts in regard to carrying out of any on-ground activities in revised license area.
- The applicant will consult caving organisations prior to carrying out of any on ground activities in license area.
- The applicant will investigate other limestone resources for suitability of quality and cost.

In late June, a further letter was received from MRT, enclosing an accompanying letter and map from the Western Australian "Tenement Administrator" for Western Metals Resources Limited requesting a modified application area for the "*Exploration License 17/99* (*dated 9 August 1999*)". The MRT letter states that Western Metals request to "…*vary the exploration license application to satisfy the resolution of the meeting that exploration activities take place only to the west of gridline 395 000mE.*"

The accompanying map from Western Metals (in Western Australia) now details an area of 13km², with three extra 1km grid squares, making it 3km² larger than the 10km² area defined at the mediation session by the Tasmanian General Manager of Western Metals in their Burnie office. The three extra 1km grid squares sit in an "L" shape above Gridline 53(93)000mN and immediately butt against the western side of the known karst (at Gridline 395000mE) where there are numerous nearby caves. Two of these extra 1km grid squares (the two that butt against Gridline 395000mE) coincide with the boundaries as originally advertised by the Western Australian division of Western Metals in the MRT notice published in *The Advocate*. The third extra 1km grid square (to the west) is a totally new area – not previously shown in the advertised area or shown on the map of the Tasmanian division of Western Metals – and encompasses another area of limestone "pointed out" by Henry Shannon at the mediation session in Burnie.

So it begs the question: **what area are we talking about as the modified EL?** Is it the recent 13km² area now indicated by the Western Australian division of Western Metals, or the 10km² area shown to us at Burnie by the Tasmanian division of Western Metals? Either way, both include the area of limestone west of the northern arm of *Lake Mackintosh* - recorded as *Charter-Southwell* (Kiernan, 1995) – where no on-ground studies have occurred, but air photo interpretation indicates the possibility of some larger dolines and another small area of polygonal karst (Grimes, 1999).

Continued objections to the Western Metals Exploration License:
The three speleological organisations (ASF, SRCC and STC) have all indicated they intend to maintain their

opposition to the EL proposal by Western Metals and letters to that effect have been forwarded to MRT. Following is the text of the recent letter sent to MRT from Southern Tasmanian Caverneers:

Mineral Resources Tasmania, PO Box 56, Rosny Park, Tasmania. - ATTENTION: Dennis Burgess

At our recent (July) meeting, we discussed your June 2000 correspondence regarding our objections to the Exploration License application by Western Metals to source limestone at Mt. Cripps, and heard a report back of the Burnie mediation session from the ASF representative (Arthur Clarke).

STC wishes to maintain its objection to the Exploration License on the following basis:

- The limestone in the western area of the modified EL application area is geologically the same unit of carbonate rock with the known caves or karst features (further to the east) that have been documented by the Savage River Caving Club. It is highly probable that this unexplored western area would also contain significant karst features, caves and cave fauna.
- There has been no prior assessment of the western area to ascertain its karst potential, including subterranean drainage and likelihood of caves with significant features including cave fauna, vertebrate remains and possible archaeological values.
- The report given to STC on outcomes of the mediation session in Burnie, indicated that Western Metals were reducing their EL area by two-thirds to a smaller area covering 10 square kilometres. However, the subsequent letter received from you in late June – shows a modified or revised EL area of 13 square kilometres – so, we are now concerned that there appears to be some discrepancy in regard to the actual size of the EL area being applied for.
- In further regard to the size of the proposed exploration area, STC believes that the revised EL is still unnecessarily large for the requirements of a limestone quarry, whether the EL is as you indicate: a larger 13sq. km or the lesser 10sq. km. area indicated by Western Metals.

Despite the last dot point in your list of the agreed outcomes, STC are concerned that there is no indication that the company will seriously consider investigating alternate options of non-cavernous limestone, e.g., St. Valentines Peak, or endeavouring to seek a supply from existing limestone sources at Railton or Mole Creek prior to proceeding with their EL application.

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PWH - Dept. Parks, Wildlife & Heritage (1990) *The appropriate boundaries of a World Heritage Area in Western Tasmania*. Report to the Minister for Parks, Wildlife and Heritage. 70p.

Dixon, G. and Duhig, N. (1996) Compilation and assessment of some places of geoconservation significance*. Report to the Tasmanian RFA environment and Heritage Technical Committee. 78p.*

Grimes, K.G. (1999) *Mt. Cripps Karst Area: Implications of karst for proposed limestone quarry sites*. Unpublished report to Western Metals Resources, Ltd., August 1999: 30pp, with 24pp. appendix of alternate limestone & dolomite sources.

Heap, D. (1999; 2000) Human Impact on the Mount Cripps Karst. *ACKMA Jnl.*, **37**: 4-11. Reprinted (2000) in *Speleopod* **#36** (June 2000): 15-22.

Kiernan, K. (1995) *An atlas of Tasmanian karst*. (Volume 1) Tasmanian Forest Research Council, Inc. 255pp.

♦ ♦ ♦

Relay Caving with the TAG Team: 21-25/5/2000

Party: Ashley Chan and Andy Zellner (Dogwood City Grotto, Georgia), Hans Benisch, Jeff Butt By Jeff Butt

This was a "see the best of Australia in 2-weeks" style holiday; Andy and Ashley emailed Arthur and decided that caving in Tassie was worth half of their Annual Leave. To cover all bases, we started with a quick run-through of the local techniques at Fruehauf Quarry. Interestingly enough it seems that TAG cavers (that's cavers from the Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia area of the USA) don't use cows-tails, instead they use a third ascender on a sling for negotiating rebelays etc. Also, ropes are carried coiled over the shoulder and not carried in packs....that explained the 'handbag' sized packs!

First cave was Midnight Hole for a quick introduction to the Tasmania underworld and glow-worms.

Mini-Martin with lots of mid-pitch knots was day 2... with Niggly, K.D. and Splash Pot rigged, there wasn't much in the way of ropes left in the store.... so there was a great knot to cross half way down the entrance shaft. We zoomed up to the Eastern Grand Fissure; the 50 Watt 'Cave Blaster' made this part of the cave even more remarkably well endowed with formation that it normally seems! The trip back through the bush was a bit more arduous than our visitors were normally used to, so they opted for a lay day to follow.

Hans and I were keen to cave, and so headed in to Wolf Hole to do some more surveying behind Lake Pluto whilst water-levels were still down. Meanwhile Andy and Ashley had been entrusted with the Orana and had headed off to check out Newdegate Cave and environs. At the end of the day we cruised back to Hobart to clean some gear.

Next day it was up to the Junee-Florentine; wet, wet it was and everything was in flood. Hans had some business to attend to, so opted out of this 'leg' of the trip, so it was just us three who cruised up to Growling Swallet for a look... they had just graded the road, so with 5-10cm of slop on top, it was a bit interesting at times! Water levels were such that doing a Slaughterhouse Pot through trip was out of the question, but we did sneak down the dry by-pass and goggle at the thumping great waterfalls pummelling down the swallet. Not surprisingly, Junee Resurgence was up too. Back to the Tyenna Valley Lodge for lodging.... we were lucky to get some floor space as the place was booked out. Dinner for us was a couple of cans of stuff on toast, as they were too crowded to feed us... (outside the Cockatoo cafe, Maydena isn't the gourmet capital of anywhere!).

The grand finale was to be Niggly Cave and the Black Supergiant.... TAG cavers seem to have a penchant for 'pit dropping', but it was way too wet. Instead we opted for a trip into Khazad Dum. First obstacle was the pine-trees over the road. I had been warned about them, but had forgotten to pack the bow-saw, so Plan B was to tow them off the road with the Orana, that worked fine,

the old tow-rope proving handy yet again. K.D. too was really wet, but we were able to cruise down the main drag. The first waterfall pitch was re-rigged, but even still I got soaked on the lower half. I pulled the rope clear of the water and let Andy and Ashley descend dry. The next pitch was fine, but very noisy. The third waterfall pitch was totally soaking, so another re-rig was in order using the bolts placed well out in the rift. We all got down there okay.... but the next pitch was definitely a no-go today, it was not possible to rig it dry at all; indeed it was difficult to keep footing in the water race near the pitch-head. So we retreated and soon warmed up as we headed out of the cave with full packs of unused rope. We emerged to daylight, so wandered up to have a look at the entrance to Cauldron Pot; as expected it was quite impressive with a large waterfall pouring into it.

Back to Hobart for a big gear clean, and the next day I packed Andy and Ashley off for the trip back to the States. All in all a bit of a whirlwind trip; the weather wasn't that helpful, but our guests did see some classic Tassie caves. I've been assured that there are plenty of classic TAG caves as well, but judging by how reluctant Andy and Ashley were to leave their knee pads behind, I imagine they must have some classic crawls too. ♦♦♦

Rope Testing Working Bee: 3/6/2000

Party: Jol Desmarchelier, Jamie Allison, Arthur Clarke, Robyn Claire, Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

As part of maintaining the gear store I aim to have a Rope Testing session around May each year in order to weed out ropes that are not capable of withstanding at least two consecutive "fall factor-1" falls with an 80kg mass (this is currently the minimum requirement for any STC rope). Individual members were also invited to bring samples of personal ropes for a test as well. A Devonshire Tea (DT) adds a social element to the event. On May 28th, heavy rain turned the rope testing into a DT testing session, but we were blessed with good weather on June 3rd and so some ropes were tested.

At this particular juncture we have 318m of rope in Niggly Cave, 271m in Splash Pot, 130m in Khazad-Dum and 106m in Growling Swallet... leaving only 314m of rope in the store. Fortunately most of the ropes destined for testing were here, or I had recently taken sample from them. We have no 'new' ropes left in reserve; all our ropes (totalling 1139m) are in active service.

Summary of testing results	Sample Origin		No. samples that held the Number of 80kg Fall Factor 1 falls		
Rope Diameter	Club	Private	1	2	3+
9 mm	3	1	0	1	2
10 mm	3	0	0	0	3
11 mm	2	0	0	0	3
Totals	8	1	0	1	8

The drop test rig was set up out the back of the gear store, Jol and Jamie using a 5:1 pulley system made short work of hauling the 80kg load; 9 samples (26 drops) were tested in under 2 hours. Each rope, if it survived was given 3 drops. The survival of a third drop indicates that the rope has some 'reserve capacity' and should still be able to meet the minimum standard for the next 12 months. Those without any 'reserve' need to be assessed on an individual basis.

All ropes tested 'passed', but one did not have any 'reserve capacity'. A summary of the samples tested and the results is shown in the table above. A table of the STC serviceable ropes is shown below (rope log-books have been kept since 1996). The areas of the table which are shaded indicate ropes which are somewhat aged for their diameter; the thinner the rope, the more important it's age becomes as with thinner rope there is less strength to begin with. Any of the ropes in the shaded areas of this table need to be tested annually. Some of the older ropes are either so short or stiff (especially 11mm Bluewater) that they never get used; so they may as well be pensioned off.

♦♦♦

Static Rope lengths, by diameter and age. (3/6/2000)

[ ] = results of last FF1 test; "nt"=not tested
{ } = total number of "uses" (no. ascents + descents)

Year Diameter	1997-1994	1993-1990	1989-1986	1985-1982	Unknown (likely pre-'82)	Total lengths
9mm	115 [>7] {16} 67 [nt] {227} 37 [>4] {>172} 28 [>3] {>241} 22 [>3] {>170} 21 [2] {>198} 16 [>4] {>184} 14 [>4] {>177}	198 [>5] {12} 14 [>4] {>181} 9 [3] {>140} 9 [>4] {>85}				550m
10mm	13 [>3] {>292} 11 [>10] {>202} 6 [>10] {>194} 6 [>10] {>194}		16 [>3] {>178} 15 [>5] {>51} 14 [>3] {>258} 13 [>3] {>110} 12 [5] {>24} 11 [nt] {>164} 11 [nt] {>45} 9 [nt] {>} 8 [>3] {>45} 8 [>3] {>}	10 [2] {>68} 9 [2] {>64}		172m
11mm		70 [nt] {79} 47 [nt] {131} 39 [nt] {67} 23 [>15] {>} 22 [nt] {138} 17 [>15] {>82} 13 [>7] {>105}	15 [>3] {>}	38 [>10] {>83} 23 [>3] {>28} 12 [>3] {>} 6 [>3] {>}	22 [>3] {>} 18 [>5] {>18} 13 [>3] {>} 12 [>3] {>} 12 [>3] {>} 10 [>3] {>13} 5 [nt] {>}	417m
Total	356m	461m	132m	98m	92m	1139m

Splash Pot (JF 10) Reveals Further Extensions: 14/6/2000

Party: Jeff Butt, Damian Bidgood, Hugh Fitzgerald. By Hugh Fitzgerald

Jeff tricked Damian and I into a trip into Splash Pot by showing us the sketches of the survey data collected on previous trips into the cave (see Speleo Spiels #314, p.10; #317, p.5; #318, p.4-5; #319, p.9 & p.17). These revealed that certain leads in Splash Pot were within 50 metres of Khazad Dum and heading in more or less the right direction. All we two Splash Pot neophytes had to do was squeeze our way down through Close to the Bone (the infamous tight section of Splash Pot), to be handsomely rewarded with the connection through to KD and an easy way out to the surface.

The lure was too much for us. We both gave up a day's work to join Jeff on this foolhardy undertaking. An intentions note was left with the Police SAR group ("in case of overdue party, potential rescuers entering Splash Pot must be thin in the body and thick in the head…"), then we were off to make history.

Progress to the cave was easy, thanks to the reflector tags which Dave Rasch had tied to trees using pink parcel tape. These lead from the KD track up the far side (true left) spur of the gully in which Splash Pot may be found. The pink tape is visible in the daylight, and the reflectors show up brilliantly by torchlight in the dark.

We headed underground at 11am, down the narrow entrance rift and down the wet pitches (which Jeff thought were wetter than previous trips). All the way into the cave, talk between Damian and I was focussed on achieving the new connection; this focus sharpened when confronted with the reality of forcing our two large bodies through *Close to the Bone*. Almost anything had to be better than heading back out this way, with gravity acting against effort.

Jeff led the way down, pointing out the widest parts of the constricted passage. One might just fit the narrowest blade of a spark plug feeler gauge into the spots he indicated. With some grunting and grinding, he wriggled through these gaps, expecting Damian and I to accompany him. Like fools, we tried to follow. Much time was spent in the process, but eventually we got through, minus only the odd limb or torso.

From here on things were much wider. We raced down the next pitch series and on to where the cave ended in the 1980s (see Speleo Spiels #225 & #228). Climbing up the new fixed ladder, we accessed the recent extensions the cave has offered up to exploration. A number of fine straw formations and sediment banks are encountered through the next section. Jeff had prepared a few warning signs and flagging tape to help protect these features, which he put in position on the approaches to the delicate parts. We wriggled past the formation in contorted positions, incurring some trauma to our own delicate parts in the process. During some of these crawls, I noticed what appeared to be Spiriferida casts in the rock. There were quite a few such fossils evident.

Jeff led on down "Tend'n Down" pitch and showed us Harrow the Marrow pitch head, where we peered out into the black abyss beyond. Following back upstream, we came to the area called "Mad Englishman and Dogs", where the promising leads heading for Khazad Dum were to be found.

We decided to begin surveying a promising pair, which were side passages at survey stations 241 & 242. Jeff was unfortunate enough to handle the dog's share of the work, by undertaking both booking and instruments. This situation arose because neither Damian nor I could read the inclinometer, due to it being fogged with condensation. Jeff claimed he could read it perfectly well! (He must have anti-fog lenses in his spectacles). As neither Damian nor myself claim any expertise with the sketching required for booking, Jeff assumed this task as well. Actually, we knew that our efforts would never please the fastidious Mr. Butt, so we thought it better to leave it to him.

The two side passages led in gentle slopes up from the main passage, and turned out to be joined in an oxbow. We pushed each until they became too grovelly, surveying as far as we got to.

At this point, rather than head directly for the other promising leads heading towards Khazad Dum, Jeff craftily suggested we check out the end of "Mad Englishman and Dogs". This was in the wrong direction from KD, but I thought we might as well have a look at things while we're down here. Damian had started to fidget nervously at this point. Jeff led us to survey station 230, where he had begun surveying out of the cave when this area was found (see Speleo Spiel #319, p.27). A short climb in this aven had not been investigated.

Up we went, with Jeff declaring that while we were checking out the lead, we might as well survey what we found to tie up the loose end. This sounded reasonable, so starting from station 230; we worked inwards along a short passage that soon intersected a much larger aven with a stream running through it. Wow – big cave! Damian and I were off looking around at all the new stuff. Avens connected to other avens, and I found a short pitch off a side passage. Damian followed up the main stream to a rockfall. Jeff was complaining loudly from behind that we must survey it, and to come back and help him. Reluctantly, I admitted he had a point, and came back to assist with the measuring tape.

We spent an hour surveying what we found, and pushed our way past the rockfall to find a short section of stream passage, which made for easy walking and surveying. This led up to another rockfall that had the stream emerging from it; this was too small to push through.

All the while Damian continued to shuffle about in a distracted manner, not really focussed on the task at hand. We hadn't found a connection to Khazad Dum, and we had run out of time to investigate further. He was gravely concerned with the prospect of heading back out through Close to the Bone. None of us knew for sure whether his muscle bound frame would make it.

Our turn-around time had come and gone, so we packed up and raced off. This had been a slow trip from the start, and I knew that our exit wouldn't be any faster. Jeff suggested to me that when we got to Close to the Bone, one of us should stay behind Damian and one go in front. I'm not too sure why he thought one of us should stay behind the human plug - perhaps to push while the other pulled? In the event, he magnanimously offered to lead the way out. I had drawn the short straw!

I soon caused some alarm by racing off ahead of the others into Close to the Bone. They assumed I didn't want to get stuck behind the traffic jam, but I let them catch up and pass (in the only place which is wide enough to do so). We handed packs to each other through this section. It would be a nightmare to try and lug one's own tackle sack through there.

There are three especially constricted parts in what seems a very long tight section. I was worried about the third of these – the first we encountered on the way out. It requires inserting the body through gaps between the walls at a

roughly 45 degree angle, while a metre or more off the floor. There is no purchase to be had above nor below, so it requires wriggling to move anywhere. Surprisingly, it was easier than I thought it would be going back out, upwards. The other two had already made it through, and I knew I was the skinniest of the party, so I had a psychological advantage.

The second constriction is the vertical slot for which Jeff had devised the "bread board" measurement. This determines the depth of one's ribcage from anterior to posterior surfaces (or should that be dorsal to ventral?). I measure up at a lean 22cm, so knew I'd have no trouble slipping through. Jeff is a tight 25cm, while Damian's measurement hadn't been gauged. On the way in he'd had problems with his pelvis being too large. Now, he managed to squeeze up into the slot, where he caught tight. I did, in fact, come in useful at the rear, by starting a blazing fire beneath him. This encouraged him to make the extra effort and push himself up through the constriction. I writhed my way up behind him, finding the going rather awkward due to my trailing limbs.

The first constriction posed no problem and we were soon out of Close to the Bone and found ourselves at the bottom of the wet pitches. We ascended these and made our weary way out of the cave to the entrance. My battery failed just beyond the pitches (I'd already blown both bulbs in my lamp on this trip), so I resorted to the thin light of my back up Petzl Micro. It didn't help that the lens was covered in a smear of mud, but I was too filthy to get it any cleaner.

We finally emerged, cold and hungry and tired, at midnight -13 hours after entering the cave. This is much longer down Splash Pot than any previous trip; this sad fact is the only history we made on the day.

We still had a walk in the dark to get to the car park and a long drive home. All this was achieved in record time, thanks to Dave's track reflectors and to Damian's impressive driving – the latter at some cost to my stomach, regrettably, which lost its contents as we reached Hobart; a fitting way to finish a long and draining day.

♦ ♦ ♦

Niggly Derig: 18/6/2000

Party: Andras Galambos, Hugh Fitzgerald, Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

The aim of the day was to derig Niggly, which we achieved without any dramas. GPS data was collected (a fix each 15 seconds) for the track to Niggly; locations for JF398, JF238 were obtained en-route. We also obtained a fix for a survey marker "Trevor Wailes / Nick Hume Ice-Tube survey #85", from 1990 ("N-IT85"). The Niggly track is exceedingly (excessively perhaps) marked with rolls and rolls of tape, mostly of the paper / biodegradable kind.

We cruised down Niggly, it was all straightforward apart from Hugh's brief 2nd take at the "Ball tingling traverse", to the Black Supergiant pitch. Andras headed down, but after about 40m 'chickened out' and returned. So, the derig started before Hugh and I had even made a start on the cross-word puzzle Hugh had taken down to occupy our time whilst Andras yo-yoed.

On the way out we marked all (that's 13 in total) bolt casings (I took in 8 new bolt markers), and a summary of the rigging we removed follows. Please replace the bolt markers after use. Note that the nylon bolts for these markers are 20mm long, they only need to be screwed in 2-3mm. If you screw them in all the way, they are liable to be difficult to remove and may snap off, leaving you with a useless bolt casing.

- Entrance pitch-15m rope, thread down low on the left before tunnel, thread on the left at the lip, bolt high up on the RHS, gives a free-hang.
- 2nd pitch-18m rope (about 3m spare), Y-belay from two bolts (on opposite walls) about 5m out along the rift (good ledges).
- 3rd pitch (after the "Tingling" traverse). 28m rope. Bolt on the RHS about 2m back from the lip, second bolt on the LHW at the lip, bolt rebelay about 8m down.
- 4th pitch. 20m rope. Thread on the RHS about 3m back from lip, small tape on RHS and long tape / rope loop on bollard LHS, down about 4m to bolt on LHW which gives a nice free-hang.
- 5th pitch. About 20m rope, Bollard on RHS, another on the LHS, then a bolt on the LHS once out the window.
- Bolt on the RHW (we marked) just before the traverse around the exposed arete.
- Black Supergiant pitch-200m rope (had shrunk down to ~180m) was just enough! Two bolts at the pitch-head, then two bolts at 6m down near the lower corner of the chockstone.

Everything went very smoothly on the way out, it was a trip with the minimum of fuss. There was one dark cloud however, as somewhere along the side of the road are all of Hugh's caving thermals... the lesson here is don't leave things on the roof of the car and drive off! ♦ ♦ ♦

Khazad-Dum: 24/6/2000

Party: Jeff Butt, Liz Canning, Hugh Fitzgerald, Steve Phipps and Dave Rasch. By Steve Phipps

Having recently arrived in the State, this was to be my first taste of Tasmanian caving. Unsure what to expect, I set off with a bunch of intrepid local cavers on a mission to connect KD to Splash Pot.

Before we'd even got changed, I'd discovered one welcome difference between Tasmanian and Pommie caving. The caves here are virtually on Hobart's doorstep; none of the tedious four- or five-hour drives from Oxford to the Yorkshire Dales that I'm all too familiar with. So it was still early in the day when we were changed and on our way to the cave. Another big difference was abundantly obvious as we made our way through the rainforest - if this was Yorkshire, we'd be walking across open moorland or a bleak, wind-swept fell, with nothing more than drystone walls and the occasional sheep to impede our progress.

After a pleasant walk, we arrived at the entrance and I was struck by the beauty of the rainforest setting. Apparently, it was wetter than usual, with water thundering down. We began our descent and I soon realised that KD is a very Yorkshire-style cave, vertical in character and with a decent stream flowing through the bottom of it. Down the pitches we went - the 28m pitch is spectacular and the 21m pitch almost as fine. Lovely free hangs too!

Once down the 21m pitch, we had reached our destination. Here, a short passage heads back beneath the pitch. Jeff reckoned that, at the end of this passage, just 11m separated KD and

Splash Pot – tantalising indeed. Thus began several hours of enthusiastic exploring and hammering. First we investigated a chamber off to the right of the passage. No way on was found, but a short climb led up to another small chamber with a 20m-high aven at the back. Water was flowing out of a passage that could be seen to head off at the top, but there was no way of reaching it. Furthermore, we wanted to be heading down if we were going to reach Splash Pot, not up.

We then stopped for lunch, allowing me to solve a mystery that had been puzzling me all day. I'd been wondering why you use such large tackle bags to carry your personal gear - far larger than the nifty little bag that I'm used to carrying. But I realised why you need the extra space when everyone produced their sandwich boxes – Pommie cavers, by contrast, seem able to survive on a Mars Bar or two!

Back to work and we set out to explore the end of the passage. A squeeze at floor level led to a short climb up. A way on to the right soon ended, but a narrow rift headed straight on - towards Splash Pot! Hugh went on a hammering frenzy and had soon disappeared from sight, followed by Dave. Alas, they eventually returned to say that the rift was tending to the left.

By now time was getting on - dinner at Tyenna Valley Lodge was beckoning - and so we surveyed our small extensions and headed out. We'd added maybe 20m to the length of the cave, but had failed to make the connection. We were therefore forced to retrace our steps, rather than making the anticipated inaugural KD-Splash Pot through trip. Back at the car, we treated ourselves to the bottle of bubbly that Jeff had optimistically brought along. Insisting that he'd really brought it to drink only if we failed to make the connection, we drank to our glorious failure.

A fantastic introduction to the local caving scene - as well as being a great cave, it was certainly an eye-opener to realise that exploration and discovering new cave is a part of everyday caving here. I'm used to having to go on annual expeditions to Spain to be able to do the sort of pushing that you seem to do every weekend here. It can only have helped that the trip was followed by champagne, a huge feast at Tyenna Valley Lodge and an absurdly relaxed Sunday morning. Is it really always this good?

♦ ♦ ♦

SES Search and Rescue Team - Southern Region

By Andy Roberts

Background

The Team in the southern region was formed during 1998 as the result of the recognition by the Emergency Services of the need for a volunteer team dedicated to supporting the Tasmania Police in the field of Search and Rescue.

The Team is to some extent modelled on the one currently operating in the North-West of the State, with whom it is affiliated through the State Emergency Service. The two Teams cooperate with one another, share similar ideals and combine for joint training exercises.

Coordination

The Team has a Unit Manager who is responsible to the SES Southern Regional Coordinator and who in turn liases closely with the Tasmanian Police and other senior Emergency Service personnel.

Membership

The Team has 25 volunteer members, many of whom have links with other municipal units but all of whom attend specialist training sessions including both practical and theoretical components.

Membership of the Team is open to persons with the right background skills and experience, particularly those currently already involved in the State Emergency Service.

There are regular opportunities for outside organisations, such as bushwalking clubs etc to participate in joint training exercises and be affiliated with the Team. During an extensive search, or when particular skilled expertise was required, these agencies could be important to the success of any search or rescue mission.

Operational Duties

The Team is ideally placed to respond to emergencies in the southern region of the State and is able to respond to call-outs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Because the Team could be asked to assist other regions if requested, there are members with a wide depth of experience and training, as well as local knowledge across the whole of Tasmania and areas interstate.

Equipment

The Team is equipped to a high standard, though members provide much of their own gear for standard bush searches. This is supplemented with other items of a technical nature, such as stretchers, vertical rescue equipment or cave rescue gear.

Unit gear is maintained by the members and all members are expected to be thoroughly familiar with its use.

Training

Members are expected to attend monthly evening sessions, based at the Regional Headquarters Unit in Hobart. Practical outside training is also conducted on a regular basis in order to retain and increase the skill levels within the Team.

All members accept the requirement to keep physically fit, to remain up to date with changing training or operational requirements and to attend all training sessions.

Activation

The Team may be activated by the Southern Region SES Coordinators based in Hobart after a request for assistance from the Tasmanian Police. The Call-out will proceed from the Coordinators to the Unit Manager who will then call-out the members on a needs basis.

Senior team members have access to a pager system and mobile phone, and operate a duty roster so as to ensure there is always a key person to activate the team.

Readiness

Team members are expected to be able to respond to a call-out promptly and to arrive at the meeting point fully equipped with the appropriate gear. Many members will choose to keep their gear packed so as to allow a quicker response time.

Roles of the Team:

Search Assistance

- Communications
- Search coordination
- Reconnaissance
- Conduct searches
- Remote area Operations
- Navigation
- Vertical Rescue
- Helicopter Operations
- 4 x 4 vehicle operations.
- Conduct regular training

Rescue Assistance

- Administer First Aid
- Patient extrication
- Communications
- Rescue coordination
- Conduct regular training

Further information

Persons requiring further details on the SAR Team are advised to contact the Southern Regional Coordinator of the SES at the city HQ. ♦ ♦ ♦

Ross Walker Cave(s) and Environs: 25/6/2000

Party: Dave Rasch, Steve Phipps, Liz Canning, Hugh Fitzgerald, Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

This was a low-key day following the 'STC Winter Extravaganza' held at the Tyenna Valley Lodge. Details of this event remain sketchy.... ahh, we shouldn't have started the festivities with champers at the K.D. car-park "yesterday". With an early start (early in the afternoon that is!) and bright sunshine we got away from the comforts of the 'lodge' and headed up to Junee Quarry.

Using Dave's memory we headed towards Ross Walker Cave; we contoured to the left up to the head of the gully, then contoured out of the gully onto the ridge. Dave's memory said that the direct line approach was quite scrubby. In the vicinity of Ross Walker Cave the ridge gets quite stony, and at some point (up higher than you think!) on the ridge the Ross Walker depression is found. It actually looks like a small quarry.

Ross Walker 2 is found near the access corner to the Ross Walker Quarry. It is a small cave with masses of tree-roots and much moon-milk.

On the opposite side of the Ross Walker Quarry is the main Ross Walker entrance (JF63?). The cave is very spacious, and descends over boulders (some flowstone covered) to a small pool. There are many initials scratched into formation / moon-milk in this area. The cave could do with some track-marking, as there is no well defined route. Back up the slope and to the right (on the way out), you can go through a low point and near a large vertical entrance (~8m pitch), which is possibly JF64? before coming to a horizontal entrance (JF65) to get a view over pine plantations and Maydena.

Despite Dave's 'scrub warning', we decided to take the direct approach back to the car, but we got side-tracked looking for holes along a small cliff-line of exposed limestone along our route. We found three holes, (Holes 37-39), briefly described below. We have GPS fixes for these; Hole 39 needs to be revisited. We arrived back at the cars with a small amount of daylight to spare.

Hole 37: Similar to Ross Walker 2 cave, about 15m long and 5m deep with two chambers.

Hole 38: A cave under rockfall, about 10m long.

Hole 39: About a 10m pitch into a spacious looking room…. leading to ???

To the south of us, was the humungous doline formed over the end of Junee Cave, one could see a small 'paddock' in the base of this doline, so presumably the area is well endowed with sediments. ♦♦♦

Splash Pot-The GST Strikes, it's 10% Extra: 1/7/2000

Party: Dave Rasch, Jol Desmarchelier, Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

Jol had finally finished his thesis corrections and had expressed an interest in getting back into some caving.... so we grabbed him for a return to Splash Pot... the silly man said YES, even though he's been there several times before. The day started off badly with the introduction of the GST, and then Jol was over half an hour late… so we left Hobart well behind schedule.

Up in the J-F, things were a lot drier than they were on June 14th, so it was quite a pleasurable trip in, well as pleasurable as this cave can be in that warped way only appreciated by a keen caver without the sense to realise that there are probably much nicer ways to spend a day.

Neither Dave nor Jol had seen "Mad Englishman and Dogs" (MEAD). I had a copy of the surveys of both K.D. and Splash Pot with us.... the aim was to make the connection. I also had a list of 23 leads that needed looking at. This time we went back straight to the No. 1 best lead that we avoided on the June 14th trip. We thoroughly surveyed and explored the area, but didn't push maniacally hard anywhere, as the main aim of the trip was to flesh out as many of the 23 leads that we could without getting into time intensive tasks anywhere. This No. 1 lead, led to a tight phreatic tube in the ceiling, a bit of breeze.... but too narrow without work, so it's FAD (For Another Day). [The survey data shows that we reduced the distance SP246-KD246 from 36m @061°,+57° to 27m @045°, +32°, still a way off.]

We then headed back to the No. 2 lead looked at last time, to check out a couple of thin "Close to the Bone-like" stream passages. Dave had a go at the first, whilst I looked up at the fissures in the ceiling at the end of the lead... too thin. Dave gave up in the streamway and I showed him the wombat hole that one could hear a small stream down below (which I thought entered the same streamway he tried to get in earlier, but higher up). A bit of a play with the sides of the wombat hole revealed that some of it was just mud on bedrock. After 10 minutes we had removed the mud down to the bedrock, to leave a hole of human proportions. We sent Dave in for a look, and indeed it led to the same streamway that he couldn't get up earlier, but there was another branch that came in that led on and on. Dave disappeared for 15 minutes and then emerged covered in mud…. there was a lot more cave up there, that got bigger and bigger.

We retreated for lunch and a debate... Where Dave had been was pretty horrible, wombat sized passage, lying in the streamway and mud. The thought of surveying it wasn't very attractive... but where did it go? We have been very diligent at surveying what we have found, and in the end we relented and bit the bullet. Surveying was slow and awkward at first, but soon the 'oversized rabbit burrow' opened up into a thin rift that became steeper as it ascended. We got into some scary country; big slabs of rock half suspended from the ceiling, partly held up by water loosed boulders that we had to move / crawl over to get to the passage on the other side... the sort of stuff nightmares are made from! Anyway, we passed that obstacle without problem and soon found ourselves in a large chamber with several leads. We chose the upstream one, which entered a canyon; the roof being somewhere like 20 plus metres above us. [The survey data shows that we were ascending under the contact, as we traversed towards Dribblespit Swallet... it would be just our luck to connect Splash Pot to Dribblespit, it would be about the worlds worst through trip with CTTB, GST and the unpleasantness of Dribblespit itself!] One of the small side inlets was directly (albeit 106m) below JF12. At the end of this passage, we are almost under (80m @053°, +51°) Peanut Paste (JFX70), a hole not yet bottomed (see Speleo Spiel 314, p15-16).

The time was well past nigh, time to split. I think we all agreed that we'd probably never want to return to this part of the cave again, you can have your GST, we don't like it! But, there are several leads in the passage that need to be resolved, so in time we'll probably be tempted back even if we really don't like it there!

The trip out was pretty smooth, but given our late start and eleven hours down this tough hole, it was another of those early morning arrivals in Hobart. The normal recovery period and trog-suit repair period was invoked; Splash Pot is rather a wearing little Pot. If you want to gauge how so, just talk to or observe one of the regulars sometime in the 48 hours after the trip!

At the end of the day, Splash Pot had grown by around 10%, or 238m in length to 2144m. OK, I'll come clean, one 11th of 2144 is actually 195m, so we increased the length of the cave by 12.5%, not 10%. But it's true that the GST will never get up to 12.5%, well at least not for a little while.... never ever trust a politician.... and never ever trust a caver who says that Splash Pot is a breeze or that Splash Pot will be finished soon!!

♦ ♦ ♦

Valley Entrance Through Trips for SAR Team: 3&4/7/2000

Party: 3rd: Damian Bidgood, Cathy Buchanan, Simon, Mal Budd, Jeff Butt.
4th: John Cherry, Christian, Kate, Ray Curran, Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

The aim was to give the SAR team some familiarisation with and experience in Exit Cave.

We wandered over the Southern Ranges track, there were no worries following the track (you just have to remember to head off the track just past the big log with cut-outs, which is near the saddle), and follow the well taped track (blue tape and blue paper tape) to IB120, passing the turn off to Western Creek Swallet and IB19 en-route. There are a couple of monster tree-falls en-route.

Route finding in the cave was OK, but I was a little rusty and had to go and 'have a look' several times to refresh my memory. On each trip we took a detour from the main drag up the Eastern Grand Fissure, and to the Ballroom. Our transit time was around five hours on each trip.

Water levels were very low, the lowest I can ever recall seeing. The main streamway was rarely ankle deep, though there were some large deep pools (they'd be good swimming holes in the sunshine!). Mystery Creek water enters about 50-100m downstream from the Mystery Creek passage and the main stream way was striped (tannin coloured and clear water running side by side) for about 50m downstream from here.

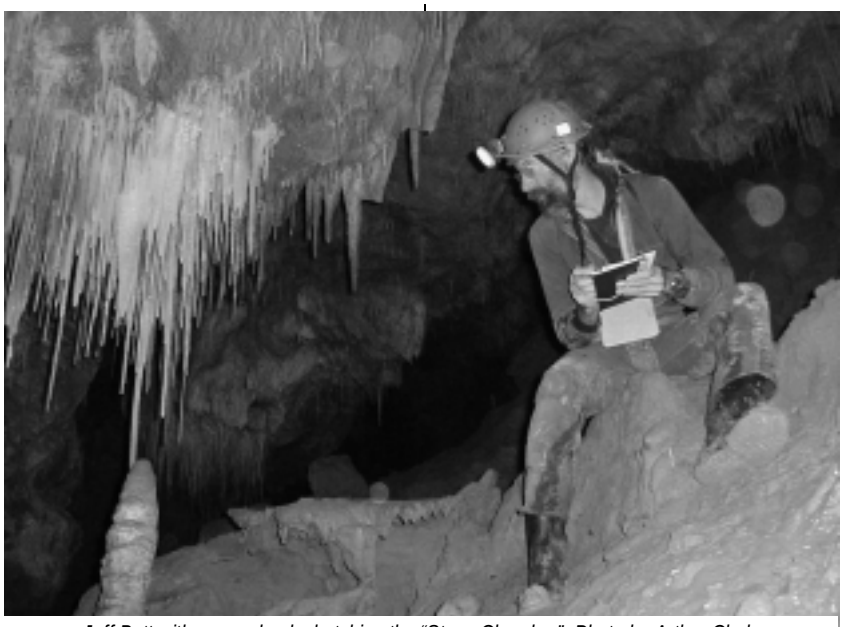
Temperatures, at the in-situ thermometer at 6pm on the 3rd Valley Entrance was 8.6°C, whilst on the 4th at about 3 p.m. it was a cooler 8.2°C. The stream temperature on the 3rd was 9.2°C.

I collected GPS track data (each 15 seconds) en-route to Valley Entrance, and also back along the Skinner Track.... which has suffered a number of tree-falls in recent wind-events.

♦ ♦ ♦

Wolf Hole - A Survey Project Starts

Party: 19/5/00: Damian Bidgood, Cathy Buchanan, Tim Anderson and the Jane-Franklin team (Ron, Alan Jackson, Jeff Wise, Sarah) and Jeff Butt.
23/5/00 Hans Benisch and Jeff Butt.
11/6/00 Dave Rasch, Jamie Allison, Arthur Clarke and Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt



Jeff Butt with survey book sketching the "Straw Chamber". Photo by Arthur Clarke

May 19: Tim Anderson offered for me to come along with all and sundry to have a look at the new Lake Charon. This seemed like a good idea, as did surveying this area whilst water levels were at a low level. And so it came to pass that another survey project has started.... Wolf Hole has needed a full survey for some years!

Our party of 8 headed down in the Uni. Van, which was crammed to the gunnels with gear for 8 plus five inflated car inner tubes... to be our vehicles for crossing Lake Charon. Tim, Ron, Jeff, Alan and Sarah headed in to cross the lake. I conned Damian and Cathy to help me survey our way in; we made a start at Lake Pluto (measured at 9.6°C for those interested in calibrating gonad pain) as we didn't want to make a crowd at Lake Charon; and I knew that surveying our way out just wouldn't happen. Before we made Lake Charon, the advance team had been soaked through and were off to seek the sunshine. Tim had left us with an inner tube and 50m of rope. The passage leading to Lake Charon is a crawl at best, so surveying wasn't rapid. Anyway at the Lake there was little room to squat half in the water. Damian braved the inner tube and paddled across the lake towing the rope. Because of the formations on the right-hand side of the lake the preferred route is along the left hand side, where there is about a meter of space between lake and ceiling. After Damian was across I pulled the tube back and soon found myself wet to the tits in the water, and using great care not to be wet to the eye-balls! The inner tube was a rather unsteady vehicle, especially when trying to survey mid-lake. We left a survey cairn at the far side of the lake and I made a few sketches before we beat a

Jamie emerging from the Cub Hole waterfall passage Photo by Arthur Clarke

Arthur near a cluster of straws in the chamber just before Lake Pluto. Photo by Jamie Allison

retreat to warmer climes (a wet-suit would be the go for this part of the cave)! Back at the entrance the team were all up the pitch, and we soon joined them. Surveyed 361m over 37 legs.

May 23rd: With the TAG team having a lay day, Hans and I had a quick, short trip in to add to the previous work. We concentrated on the area beyond Lake Pluto, in the branches that don't lead to Lake Charon. We found the area to be painfully extensive, with lots of crawling in a low region where the ceiling was fractured and blocks had fallen. We did reach an end in this area, but did note the existence of the area best described as the 'Mud Brick Factory', which still needs to be surveyed. Surveyed 193m over 27 legs.

June 11th: Back again, this time surveying the main-drag in from the entrance to join the surveying already done in the Lake Pluto area. Arthur entered the cave after us and quickly caught up to the main group, putting his trusty digital camera to work when not holding the end of the survey tape. We paused for lunch at Lake Pluto, then Dave took us off towards the 'Cub Hole' entrance, surveying as we went (does anyone know if this is the correct name for this "entrance"? I've read in "Caves of Tasmania" by Goede, Kiernan, Skinner and Woolhouse that "Cub Hole is a small cave which could possibly be extended by digging and it was dynamited in the 1950's due to its dangerous condition."). After some grovelling and wet crawling we reached the old manila handline rope on the 4m climb. In the rockfall regions above, Dave had reported that there was a daylight hole that wasn't possible to fit through and that there was the remains of an old radio there... presumably this was used to try and locate the entrance from the surface, i.e. go to the noise and dig. We soon made it to the 'radio', which in fact proved to be a cigarette packet sized "Fire and Burglar Alarm", there was also the remains of some string and batteries. It seems that some early explorer had left this device buzzing away whilst they tried to locate the hole on the surface. (A modern day equivalent would be to poke the GPS aerial out the hole and get a fix on its location!) In my early SCS days I recall hearing (assisted by Andrew Briggs jogging my memory) that Bill Nicholson and Pavell Williams? had found a hole from the inside and that they'd shot arrows out of it with string attached and then tried to locate them on the surface. I'd hazard a guess that the Burglar alarm was placed by them too, but haven't tracked Bill or Pavell down to find out the full details.

Dave and Jeff surveying the streamway passage to Cub Hole. Photo by Arthur Clarke

Anyway, we did not locate the daylight hole that Dave had seen some 10 years ago (and yes, it was still daylight

outside!); so perhaps there has been a collapse. Anyway, with the Wolf Hole survey data and a good GPS fix on its entrance we do have the location of 'Cub hole', and so it will be an interesting trip to try and locate this feature. There was a small stream coming in as well, so this hole is presumably in a gully on the hillside above. On the way out Dave slipped before my eyes at the top of the 4m drop, but fortunately like a cat landed on his feet unharmed.

Time was moving on so we split into two parties. Whilst Jamie and Arthur made their way up the entrance pitch, Dave and I continued with the survey of some side passages.... we made a bad choice or area, as we picked a labyrinth in an area of mud covered boulders; a somewhat poxy place indeed with leads everywhere! Surveyed 545m in 85 legs.

[Tim Anderson reports five new passages in this area. Ed]

Thus to date, we have surveyed 1099m over 147 legs. There is much, much more to do. The standing joke (on us), is that we have just started surveying the longest cave in the country!! I guess only time will tell if that's true. But, if you are interested in doing some surveying (or learning how to do some, particularly how to sketch), then you are very welcome to become involved in this project. ♦♦♦

Jeff Butt drawing the start of the Cub Hole streamway passage. Photo by Arthur Clarke

Khazad Dum: Closing in on Dribblespit Swallet: 18/7/2000

Party: Andras Galambos and Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

It was a perfectly sunny mid-week day, arguably too nice to be underground, but K.D. is where the day found us. We first surveyed down the main streamway to the top of the first wet pitch, this was another bit of the cave that hadn't been done in our re-survey.

Then we headed on down to the 'new rift' (see the trip report for 16/7/2000) that was heading in the direction of Dribblespit Swallet for a more thorough look. The tricky climb was re-done, it was somewhat easier today and a handline rigged. We headed up into the rift proper; the first part of the rift is a large canyon some 40-50m high. The second part of the rift is full of breakdown chockstones, and it was into this area that we headed, aiming to climb up into the rift and look for any passages that may intersect the rift and lead off... to Dribblespit or elsewhere.... that's the thing with this caving caper... you just never know what you'll discover!

Climbing in this rift was done very carefully, many of the chockstones were only temporarily placed and the walls of the rift were somewhat fractured. We climbed about 15m up into the rift, as high as we could reasonably go. There were several places that one could see about another 6m higher up into the rift, but this area looked too dodgy to access. At the end of the rift, a precarious position on chockstones let one see 20m down into the rift from where we had come. At our level towards the K.D. end of the rift was masses of formation and the canyon aven continued up for ~20m. [At our highest survey station, we are 8m below the level of DS#25 (which is still 35m away @039°, +13°), but above the level of the bottom of Dribblespit. A plan view shows that we are only 15m horizontally from Dribblespit, but the slope of the cave means that our level we are more distant, i.e. 34m.]

We surveyed our way back down to 'rift base level' and connected the survey in with that of 16/7/2000. We continued on with surveying (the tally for the day was 130m) along to the end of the rift and downward till the floor dropped out of the rift. The K.D. stream could be heard here, and so we presume this rift leads back down to the streamway in the vicinity of the next downstream pitch. The data shows we are about 37m above the streamway at this point, more or less at the same level as the top of the dripping aven just upstream from the penultimate streamway pitch. These drips are believed to be the Dribblespit water, so it does make one think that it might be useful to continue traversing along the 'bottomless' canyon at this point; though this would not be a trivial exercise.

Prior to heading out we looked at a couple of other potential leads in the lower streamway; the lead up above the top of the 4th waterfall pitch was tempting, but to get into the area one would have to traverse over a precariously perched block... it looks solid enough but a rope would be prudent as tumbling the ~15m to the deck with a 5 cubic metre block as a companion isn't my idea of fun. Another small inlet comes in from a formation filled rift just after the 3rd waterfall pitch, one can see about 5m up the sloping rift to where the main water drips down and it would be interesting to check it out, but access is via a committing tricky little climb which I opted out of today. Actually these drips are also a possibility for the Dribblespit water... a dye trace would tell whether this or the dripping aven near the penultimate waterfall pitch is Dribblespit water (if either!!). ♦♦♦

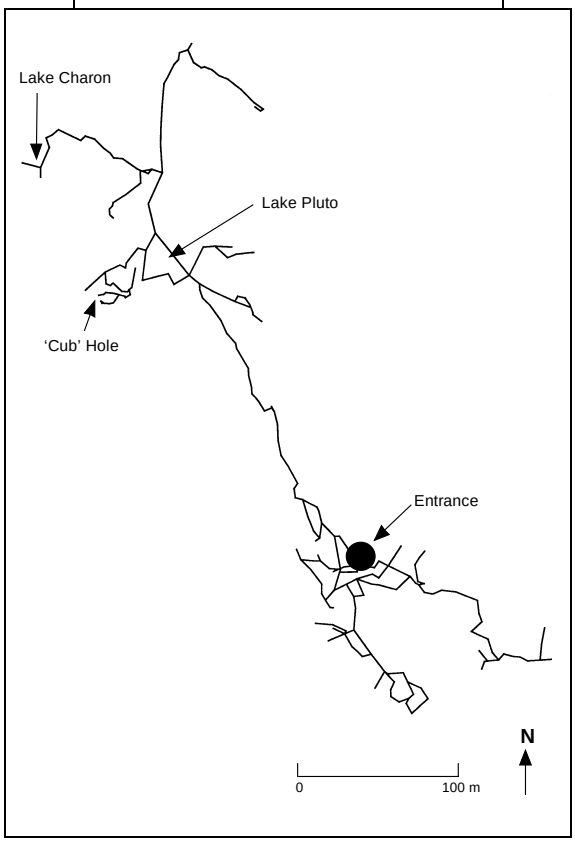
More Surveying at Wolf Hole: 8/7/2000

Party: Dave Rasch, Steve Phipps, Hugh Fitzgerald, Liz Canning, Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

Wolf Hole proved to be a popular venue, Tim Anderson and three of his students had made a 5:30am departure (they wanted to be back in Hobart by 4pm) for Wolf Hole to look beyond Lake Charon some more. We opted for a more leisurely start, and got away about 9am, thinking that we'd probably meet the others heading out as we were heading in.

The first objective for the day was to wander up the hill to look for 'Cub Hole' on the surface. Armed with a calculated position (based on the GPS fix for Wolf Hole and our survey data from the trip on 11/6/2000) in the GPS we wandered along the track towards King George V Cave, and headed up the hill following some old blue tapes. After about 4 tapes we veered off to the left into a prominent gully. Unfortunately the satellites were all lined up in a straight line across the sky, giving us a terrible Estimated Position Error (EPE) of ~40m, and thus we dispensed with technology and fanned out to search for a hole, or some evidence of Bill / Pavell's arrows. There wasn't much joy, till I spied a tiny hole hidden beneath fallen logs and a small landslip. Just up from the hole was a small stream and thus the hole had all the right properties for being the one we were after. After a bit of man handling rotting logs we managed to uncover the hole and then got a little carried away having a bit of a dig with our hands. A small amount of progress was made, but it's not very inspiring and so we left it (taped with a yellow tape, and fixed with a GPS position) for Wolf Hole. [Back at home, analysis of the survey and the position obtained suggests that this isn't our hole, we should have been about 60m South (further down the gully) where there is 20m less earth over the void below! The stream-sink we found is more likely to be a feeder for the small tributary that comes in at the head of Lake Pluto.]

After we rigged our rope, the entrance pitch to Wolf Hole looked more like a spiders web (with three ropes and one ladder). We headed in, and commenced surveying around the entrance zone and passages heading off to the SE (i.e. the opposite end of the cave to the lakes). We weren't going long before Tim met us on the way out; they had taken in wetsuits and had been investigating prospects at the far end of Lake Charon (beyond survey station #35). They had done some squeezing / digging and had made about 30-40m of headway. It is interesting to note that survey station #35 is less than 100m away from King George V Cave *[as predicted by Arthur Clarke -Ed]*, and so they are heading in an interesting direction.



Line Diagram of the Wolf Hole Survey at 8/7/2000.

With five of us, the surveying was quite rapid. Hugh hurtled around looking for the best route for us to go and checking out leads. Much of the time his face matched the colour of his trog-suit, i.e. bright red! With Steve and Liz on the tape and Dave on the instruments keeping the book up to the surveyors was a full-on job, especially in this complex cave. We made many loops and tied the survey together very well. Loop closures were excellent; thanks to eagle eyed Dave. Wolf Hole is an amazing cave, during the day we all found ourselves in bits that were new to us, and at our furthermost penetration were scarcely more than 100m from the entrance! There were some outstanding features re-discovered today; the box-work in Wolf Hole is the best I've ever seen; the 'Vermilion Room' (named by Hugh), was like a piece of Mediterranean architecture, with its arches and deep reddish / crimson (i.e. vermilion) colour. At the South-easternmost parts of the cave the overlying hill drops away significantly and tree-roots were observed in one place, and there are several as yet unsurveyed 'up leads', and so it is possible that there may be other entrances to this cave in this region.

All up we surveyed 771m (96 legs) today, bringing the tally up to 1870m. A line diagram of the survey to date is shown opposite. In reality, we have only just 'scratched the surface', there are large passages we haven't even made a start on, and there are many, many leads in the passages we have fleshed out the 'main drag' in. To facilitate the future surveying of all the 'fiddly bits', we have been leaving small pieces of flagging tape (with date and station number written on them) at strategic locations. Also, where-ever we come across old survey markers (e.g. the red reflective diamonds with numbers written on them) we have been tying them into the survey..... does anyone out their actually have any of this data? Also, does anyone want to have a guess on the final length of the cave? I wouldn't be surprised if it exceeds the 5km mark! ♦ ♦ ♦

A multi-purpose trip (and some new cave) to Khazad Dum: 16/7/2000

Party: Trevor Wailes, Ric Tunney, Janine McKinnon, Ben Rhee, Steve Phipps and Jeff Butt. By Jeff Butt

This trip was advertised on the List-Server to see what interest there was in going caving... as it turned out, there was quite a bit and in the end six of us headed off. Amongst the group were cavers with different levels of experience and objectives; but it all came together and everyone seemed to have a fun day out and achieved something.

Steve led Janine and Ric down to the area of closest approach to Splash Pot for a bit of a poke around. Ric and Janine were fine-tuning their new harnesses en-route. Trevor, Ben and I headed to a minor inlet off the Serpentine Route, which had not yet been surveyed. Ben had his first taste of cave surveying.

We all rendezvoused at the base of the 21m pitch for stage two. Ric, Janine and Steve headed down to the waterfall pitches whilst I showed Trevor and Ben around the 'closest approach to Splash Pot area', the amount of fill in the area prompted Trev. to say "I don't like your chances of connecting to Splash Pot". We then headed downstream, and met Ric and Janine who had decided to head out as they wanted to be back in Hobart at a reasonable hour.

We four then headed down to one lead spied by Dave Rasch, high up the stream canyon between the third and fourth waterfall pitches. I played around with chimneying up the stream canyon in one place, and decided that it wasn't very promising for the amount of exposure I was experiencing. A little further on, I looked at another committing climb. With Trev. to give me some moral support and to spot me, I did the climb and chimney up further into a large rift... some new cave. I returned to the top of the tricky climb and installed a rope, allowing Trev. and Steve to come up. Ben decided to wait for us.

We did a quick survey of the Rift, it was about 50m long and ~40-50m high near the start of it. Towards the back it was filled with many dodgy block chock-stones, but it did look like one might be able to climb up somewhat. At the far end the Rift descended and one could hear the K.D. streamway; so we guessed that the Rift was just a fossil oxbow of the original K.D. streamway. We retreated and started to head out.

Ben was doing his first SRT underground, and his exit was very smooth. Steve's exit was a little less smooth as a result of dropping his croll down the 2nd waterfall pitch on the way into the cave (and not being able to recover.... Murphy's law says it must be in the deepest part of the pool, right under the waterfall!). For the longer pitches he borrowed Trev's croll, and for the shorter ones he toughed it out using a spare hand-ascender as a Clayton's Croll.

We emerged to a brilliant moonlit forest; a couple of hours later we were back in Hobart watching the total lunar eclipse.

[Today's survey tally was 109m and the data showed that:

- the new Rift was not paralleling the K.D. streamway, but was diverging at about 30° to it and heading towards Dribblespit Swallet. At the furthermost point of the rift we were 35m away (@038°, +37°) from DS#25. The Dribblespit survey ends with DS#25, but this is not at the bottom of the cave; the bottom of Dribblespit is estimated to be around 20m deeper, (see the article *'Dribblespit Swallet (JF13)*', by Rolan Eberhard in Speleo-Spiel 247, 1989), which means that we are actually much closer than 35m to Dribblespit... in fact we are probably at the same level (i.e. 35*sin(37°)=21m).... so the bottom of Dribblespit is just ~28m away through the walls in a nearby (roughly parallel) rift..... argh, I can see the need for another trip to Dribblespit coming up to survey the bottom of this cave.
- the small tributary (which ends in a sump) off the Serpentine Route that we thought may be heading towards JF69 heads NW back under the contact, perpendicular to the direction to JF69. It still may be the water taken by JF69.... but we first need to survey or trace JF69 to assess this.]

♦ ♦ ♦

Recent News from Hastings

Based on a message posted to the STC List Server July 4th 2000 By Arthur Clarke

Storm wind damage has blown many trees over down south, incl. the Hastings Caves area and along recently the cleared track to Mesa Creek and North Lune karst area.

A windblown large blackwood tree recently fell into the Thermal Pool at Hastings - causing considerable damage to the surrounding lawns, picnic area, fencing, and kids pool.

In addition to this "natural devastation", preliminary heavy machinery land clearing & site surveying has commenced at the site for the new Hastings Caves Visitor Interpretation Centre, adjacent to the main road near Thermal Pool - opposite the old Hastings Caves Chalet (the former Caves Caretakers cottage).

As a result of recent Occ. Health & Safety regulation recommendations for protection of cave visitors and guiding staff. A contractor has commenced construction works in Newdegate Cave replacing old handrails & enclosing all existing unfenced walkways with stainless steel handrails and plastic coated cyclone wire netting protection.

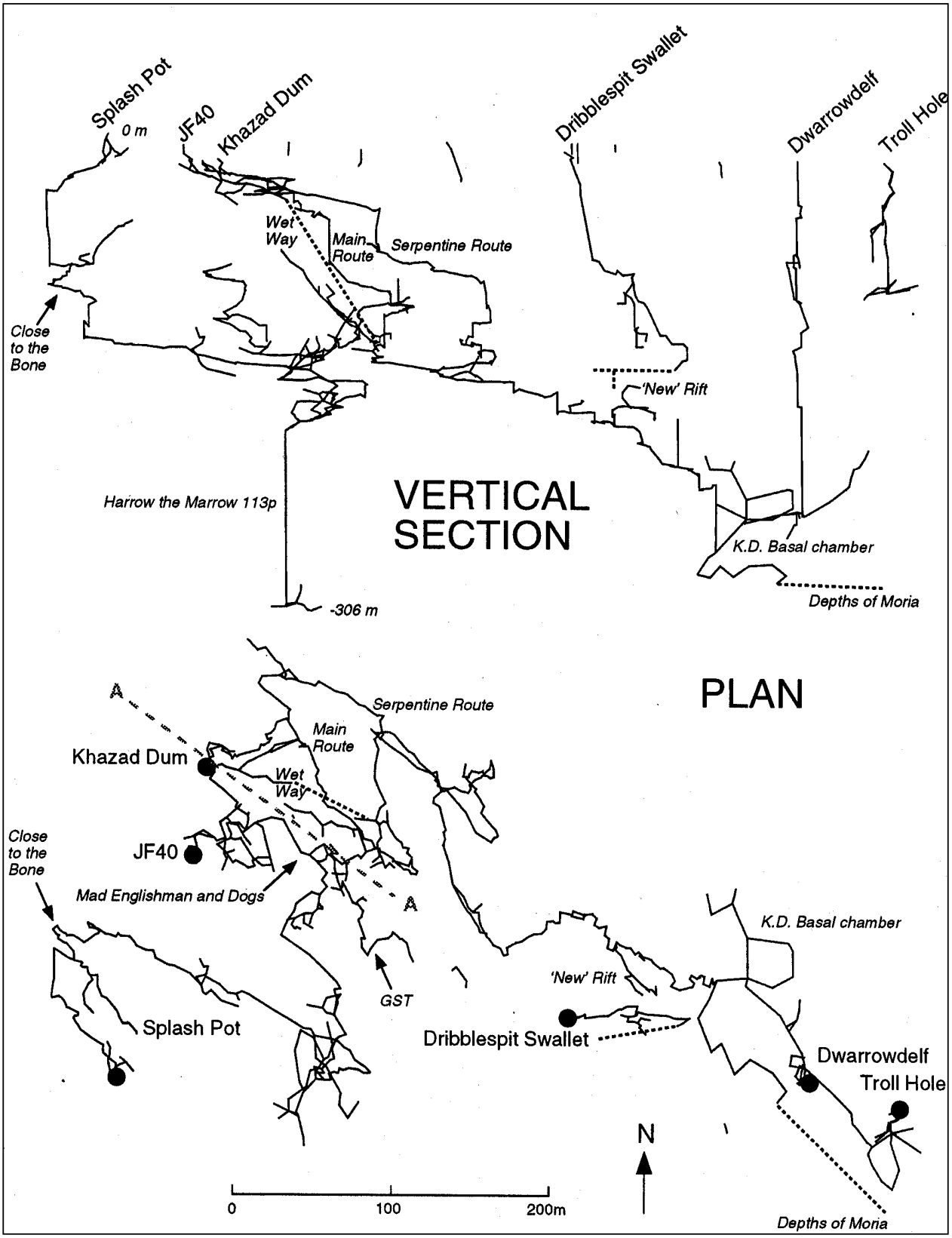
Unfortunately funding for this was rushed. Funds had to be used before the end of the financial year. It had originally been planned for the new handrails to contain water pipes and electrical cables for cave cleaning and lighting.

The first guided "Adventure Cave" tour in King George V Cave (KGV) is scheduled for today (Tuesday, July 4th). The Hastings Caves Enterprise is now offering a shortened 3 hour version of the adventure cave tour for $69.00, as well as the longer 5-6 hour tour @ $135.00 which includes a swim in the Thermal Pool and BBQ meal provided.

A search of the archived map records of Southern Tasmanian Caverneers (STC) have been unable to locate a copy of the original SCS survey of KGV (drawn by Kevin Kiernan) as requested by the Hastings Caves Enterprise – as an adjunct to their adventure cave tour operation. It is suggested that STC make an offer to re-survey the cave.

Present knowledge of the KGV system at Hastings combined with the preliminary results of the current re-survey of Wolf Hole suggest that the disappearing stream at the far northeastern end of King George V Cave may possibly be the feeder stream into the "new" Lake Charon (the recently discovered new lake beyond Lake Pluto) in Wolf Hole. ♦ ♦ ♦

The Splash Pot - Khazad Dum 'System' at 18/7/2000



The Splash Pot - Khazad Dum 'System' - Thus Far.

By Jeff Butt

In this and previous *Speleo Spiels* there have been quite a number of trip reports about discoveries in Splash Pot and the re-survey of Khazad Dum. Some of you out there if speleo-land are probably quite keen to have a look at the survey to piece it all together.

Well, as a place-holder, on the opposite page is a line-diagram of the survey data (mostly collected over the last 12 months). As of 18/7/2000 there is 6059m of surveyed (941 legs) cave passage with a vertical range of 306m, the entrance of Splash Pot being the highest point and the base of Splash Pot being the lowest. The dotted lines represent parts of the caves that have yet to be surveyed/re-surveyed. There are also some other deficiencies that are not shown, e.g. the fossil entrance of K.D., namely JF5 has not been checked out.

When you look at the Plan, it looks like one cave system, but at present the only caves that are linked are Khazad Dum and Dwarrowdelf. The 'gaps' between the main caves are all rather small, in some instances just 12m!

Despite several trips to attempt to close the gap between Splash Pot and Khazad Dum, we have not yet had any success.... though the survey data tells us we are within 12m of a connection! In the areas where the caves are near each other, Splash Pot lies underneath Khazad Dum, but all the leads in K.D. are 'up' leads, not 'down' ones. The floor of this area of K.D. is made up of large amounts of fill, so it is possible that once these caves were joined.... but now I'm beginning to think that perhaps they weren't.

If you look at survey, you can draw a line "A-A" which seems to represent a 'barrier' between the two caves. It seems that all water to the NE of this line drains to Khazad Dum and everything to the SW of this drains to Splash Pot. Perhaps there is some impervious layer / other geological feature (maybe a fold) in this area which causes this drainage pattern... but I'm not geologically enlightened enough to do more than speculate upon this. If anyone out there has some ideas that might assist, then I'd love to learn from you.

Whatever the case, this little project is providing some quite interesting caving (albeit somewhat tough caving from the Splash Pot side) and will probably keep us amused for somewhat longer.... for a start, the number of leads yet to pursue to a conclusion seems to grow with every trip!

♦ ♦ ♦

Winter Surface Madness - Hole Bopping in the Scratch - Splash Pot Area: 4/6/2000

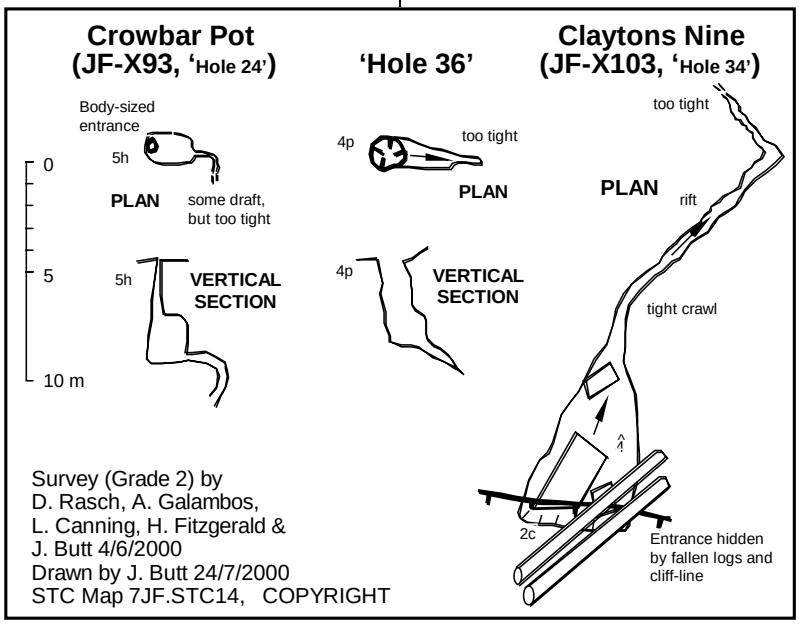
Party: Dave Rasch, Andras Galambos, Hugh Fitzgerald, Liz Canning, Jeff Butt

By Jeff Butt

The aim of the day was to visit the two 'promising' new holes found during the search for Hairy Goat Hole, to wit, Holes 29 (JF-X98) and 24 (JFX-93) (see the article in Speleo Spiel 317, page 11). Accompanying us was Dave's new friend, alias Jeff's 10kg crow-bar, which was expected to be needed to gain entry to Hole 24. We started out well, headed off on the K.D. track and turned bush at about the right spot for the minimal bash to Hole 24.... except that somehow as we neared Hole 24 some directional instability affected us (? carrying the crowbar too close to the head, or perhaps the bar wanted to line up with the magnetic field!) and we all started heading too far down the hillside, in fact we started heading about 180 degrees the wrong way. Of course the ferns were wet and even though it wasn't raining we all gradually achieved that sodden state. We eventually realised our navigation error, and after 5 people chased echoes of each other around the hillside we all managed to rendezvous at one place.... in Hole 34 country. We did find a new cave, 'Hole 36'. Whilst Andras checked that out, Dave and Liz went looking for other holes. Hugh and myself, armed with the GPS and a rough fix for Hole 34 went off to locate it. We found it OK, and whilst Hugh investigated, I obtained a better fix. Back to Hole 36 we went to rendezvous with the others.

A new plan of attack was called for, so we set off in vaguely the correct direction (despite having the GPS with us, we did not have any fixes for the Holes we sought... also, no map of the surface traverses (done in January) with us either, so we were a little ill-prepared for a swift start on our quest!). The bar was tiring out Dave and it was suggested that we 'park it" with a GPS fix to let us recover it later on but this didn't happen. Soon we found ourselves in seemingly familiar territory..... at first the large amounts of surface water made us think that we were above the contact, but then we came across Hole 29, our quest! Lunch however, was the first priority.

Whilst Andras started rigging the entrance pitch, Dave and Hugh scoured the nearby area, and I shot off with the GPS, following the route that we had surface surveyed some six months ago. I soon came across Hole 11, JF19,

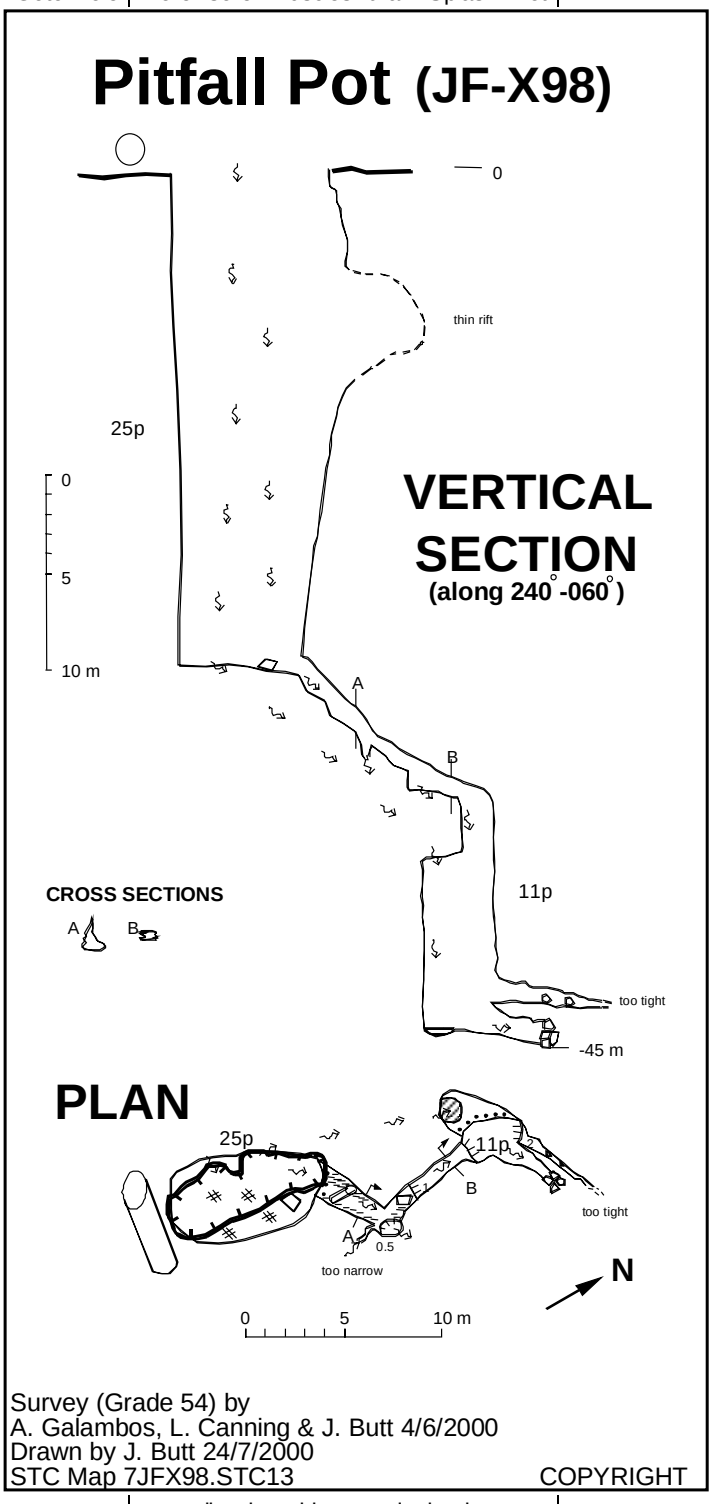


JF20, Hole 23, obtaining good fixes for them all. Hole 24 was fixed too and I headed back to Hole 29, picking up the dry valley headwall (JF-X104 en-route). I handed over the GPS in a "Goto Hole 24" state and Dave and Hugh headed off with the bar following the advice given by the magic black box. Meanwhile Andras was down Hole 29. Liz and I started surveying our way in. The entrance pitch was wet, and at the bottom there was no-where to get out of the not so insignificant 'rain'. Liz had a few technical hitches overcoming the 7' tall persons deviation and so to keep the survey going I headed out to borrow the instruments from her. Andras and I were keen to get out of the rain, and surveyed our way into drier (but mucky) country. Meanwhile Liz had used high technology to overcome the redirect from hell, and soon joined us. The nature of Hole 29 kept deteriorating and for the second pitch (which was still virgin) we had some trouble finding any anchors at all, let alone reliable ones. Liz was resting on a rock... her seat doubled for the second anchor and using a few other slightly scary bits and pieces managed to concoct a workable anchoring system. The second pitch led to a large chamber, with a couple of passages heading off.... unfortunately both were no-go; the lower was full of collapse material and the upper was too tight, so we beat a retreat for the pleasantness of the surface.

Back on the surface we re-grouped, Hole 24 "Crowbar Pot" yielded to the bar. Dave got inside, but that was about it. That draft we observed on the discovery day wasn't there today; and it's origin was an impossible tight rift... so no joy. By this stage darkness was upon us. We let the GPS give us a B-line back to the K.D. track and soon enough we were back on the well trodden route and back to the cars.

All in all, it was a silly day in the wet bush, but we all did have some fun. Despite only getting about 3m underground, Dave said that he had more sore muscles than Splash Pot normally gives him, no doubt that was due to lugging the Bar around all day through the scrubby shrubbery.

Below are the details of the holes we investigated. Where possible I have added the 'JF-X' numbers assigned by Arthur Clarke, see his table of JF caves in Spiel 318.



Hole 24 (JF-X93) "Crowbar Pot": Body sized vertical entrance drops about 5m (handline advisable) into a small chamber, then rapidly becomes too tight. Estimated depth 6m, length 8m.

Hole 29 (JF-X98) "Pitfall Pot": We believe this to be the 'Man-trap' referred to by Stefan Eberhard in his article "Resurrection of the Hairy Goat, 10th August 1986", Speleo Spiel 222. The entrance is a large fissure, about 8m long and 2m wide, which it would be easy to walk into, hence the 'man trap' description. The entrance pitch of 25m leads to a grotty tunnel that leads to the second 11m pitch. Depth is 45m, and the length is 60m.

Hole 34 (JF-X103): "Claytons Nine": Estimated to be 25m long and 15m deep. The large entrance chamber (4m by 10m by 2m) is formed in steeply dipping bedding and is obscured by a small cliff, thick bush and fallen logs. The entrance of the cave resembles JF9, hence the name assigned.

Hole 35: A feature we taped on 9/1/2000, but did not describe in the article referred to above in Spiel 317. It is located near Hole 29, but again we did not investigate it, so there is no description here! It's more than likely to be just another grotty little hole! No 'JF-X' number yet allocated.

Hole 36: Estimated at 5m deep, 8m long. A single 4m pitch leads to a passage that narrows to become too tight. No 'JF-X' number yet allocated.

♦ ♦ ♦

STC Membership Details: Updated 30/7/2000

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Greg	**Middleton**	PO Box 269 Sandy Bay 7006	6223 1400	6233 2336	gregmi@delm.tas.gov.au
Dean	**Morgan**	15 Cades Drive, Kingston, 7050	6229 4405	6234 5061	deanm@netspace.net.au
Dave	**Nichols**	1/2 Excell Lane, South Hobart, 7004	6224 4737	6226 1831	D.Nichols@utas.edu.au
Stuart	**Nicholas**	7 Rupert Avenue, New Town, 7008	6228 3054	6278 1248	stunich@pin6.com.au
Steve	**Phipps**	457 Huon Road, South Hobart, 7004	6224 6810	6226 2939	sjphipps@utas.edu.au
Tom	**Porritt**	P.O. Box 60, Millaa Millaa, 4886	03 9878 2539	070 651083	
Dave	**Rasch**	25 Delta Ave, Taroona, 7053	6227 9056	6232 3333	david_ras@antdiv.gov.au
Ben	**Rhee**	38 Agnes Street, Ranelagh, 7109	6264 1417		benslonelyplanet@hotmail.com
Andy	**Roberts**	20 Davies Road, Lower Snug, 7054	6267 9877	6267 9877	andyroberts@netspace.net.au
Phil	**Rowsell**	ENGLAND: C/o 22 Clutha Place, South Hobart, 7004			
Chris	**Sharples**	GPO Box 1941, Hobart, 7001	6239 6669	6239 6669	sharples@netspace.net.au
Aleks	**Terauds (Snr.)**	60 Belair St, Howrah, 7018	6244 3406	6244 3406	
Richard	**Tunney**	Box 1017, GPO Hobart, 7001	6243 5415	6223 9833	Ric.J.Tunney@team.telstra.com
Peter	**Verwey**	2 Lachlan Drive. Mt. Nelson, 7007			paverwey@utas.edu.au
Trevor	**Wailes**	214 Summerleas Road, Kingston, 7054	6229 1382	6229 1382	trite@ozemail.com.au
Michael	**Weeding**	1/27 Susan Parade, Lenah Valley, 7008	6278 1828	0419 541025	southisland@bigpond.com
Mick	**Williams**	Lot 16, Esperance Estate, Police Point, 7116.	6297 6368		

STC WaReHoUsE SaLeS

Publications

- "Caving Safety 1 Manual", 92 pages, covers Planning, Safety, Maps, Gear, Rigging, Emergencies etc. $15.00
- Back Issues of Southern Caver, Speleo-Spiel. There are various issues available. Please contact the Librarian, Greg Middleton (gregmid@ozemail.com.au) with your requirements. ..... ~$1 each

Gear

- CAVE PACKS, 25 litre volume, made from Heavy duty yellow PVC material, double thickness material at wear points, strong seams, drain holes, large diameter eyelet's, adjustable straps. Good Value. ..... $50.00 each
- Aluminium Bars for Rappel Racks. ..... $5.00 each
- 5 cm (2") plastic Tri-glide buckles, ideal for battery belts, cave packs etc.) ..... $0.80 each
- BATA full-length Gumboots, Size 6, Green with Orange Sole, and steel toecaps. ..... **LAST PAIR >> $25.00**

Tape

- Edelrid 25 mm tubular tape. Ideal for rigging, chest harnesses etc. (White) ..... $2.00 per m
- 5 cm (2") flat tape (ideal for harnesses, rigging, gear bags, belts etc.) (Blue) ..... $1.50 per m

Safety

- Rivory 10 mm dynamic rope (for cows tails, safety loop) ..... **NEW STOCK >> $4.00 per m,** e.g. Cowstail $11
- Space Blankets (don't be caught underground without one!) ..... $4.00 each
- Miracle Body Heat Packs (20 hours of portable heat, 50 gm sachets, carry a couple) ..... **NEW ITEM >> $2.00 each**

Lighting

- Yuasa Gel-cells, 6 Volt, 7 Amp-Hour ..... $24.00 each
- Metal Lamp Brackets, complete with fixing rivets and cable keeper ..... $7.50 each
- Plastic Lamp Brackets, used but in good condition. comes with fixing screws ..... $2.00 each
- Alkaline 4.5 Volt 'flat-pack' batteries (for Petzl Zoom's etc.) ..... **SPECIAL >> $7.00 each**
- Eveready 6 Volt, 0.5 Amp Flange Mount Bulbs #1417 (for HIGH Beam) ..... $2.00 each
- Tandy 6 Volt, 0.3 Amp Screw Base Bulbs #50 (for LOW Bean), blister packs of 2 ..... $2.00 each
- Jets (21 litres/hr) for Petzl kaboom (just a couple left) ..... $5.00 each

Tow Ropes/trailer tie downs/yacht mooring lines etc.

- RETIRED CAVING ROPE, no longer safe enough to use for caving purposes, but more than adequate for many other purposes. Available in various lengths. ..... $1.00 per m, less for the stiffer stuff

If you need any of the above please contact Jeff Butt on 03 6223 8620 (H),

or jeffbutt@netspace.net.au, or write to us:

SOUTHERN TASMANIAN CAVERNEERS,

P.O. BOX 416, SANDY BAY 7006.

STOP PRESS

Notice of Motion in Advance for the STC AGM:

The Treasurer, Arthur Clarke proposes the following two-part motion to be presented to the AGM in regard to a fee rise for the next STC year 2000-2001, and onwards:

(a) The STC fees be increased by $5.00 for all membership categories (including the affiliation of ASF for Life Members), except that the increase for Household Membership be increased by $7.50

and

(b) The Speleo Spiel subscription rate be increased to $25.00.